

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY AF/C:TRBUCHANAN:JR
APPROVED BY AF:WESCHAUFLE, JR.
S/S: F.ORTIZ
NSC: H.HORAN (IN SUBSTANCE)
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O 250104Z JAN 76 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 018891 TOSEC 010263

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SL, AO

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL
LETTER TO AVERT MPLA RECOGNITION BY SIERRA LEONE
(S/S NO. 7601542)

REF: TOSEC 10235

1. IN THE CONTEXT OF FURTHER MEASURESTO TRY AND AVERT
RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA BY SIERRA LEONE (REFTEL),
WE BELIEVE AMB. SAMUELS PROPOSAL OF A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT FORD TO PRESIDENT STEVENS HAS MERIT. SUCH
A MESSAGE WOULD BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IT IT
PROVES IMPOSSIBLE TO GET PRESIDENT TOLBERT OF LIBERIA
TO CONTACT STEVENS BEFORE TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, IN
VIEW OF TOLBERT'S PRESENCE IN KAMPALA, WHERE IT WILL
BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR US TO CONTACT HIM.

2. THE WHITE HOUSE HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO
THE SENDING OF SUCH A PRESIDENTIAL LETTER BUT WISHES
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TO HAVE YOUR VIEWS ON THE MERIT OF THE APPROACH.

3. WE PROPOSE THAT THE FOLLOWING CABLE BE SENT TO
AMBASSADOR SAMUELS, INCLUDING TEXT OF MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT FORD:

TO: AMEMBASSY FREETOWN IMMEDIATE

SECRET/NODIS

SUBJECT: TRANSMISSION OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER RE
MPLA RECOGNITION

REF: FREETOWN 209

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SCHAUFELLE

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR AVERTING
ACTION TO RECOGNIZE MPLA. WE HAVE TRANSMITTED LETTER
FROM SECRETARY TO DENNIS URGING THAT TOLBERT SEND
MESSAGE TO STEVENS. WE ARE TRYING TO CONTACT TOLBERT
IN KAMPALA. SENGHOR AND KAUNDA HAVE ALSO BEEN
ENCOURAGED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH STEVENS. IN
IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUR FINAL PROPOSAL, YOU SHOULD
SEEK EARLIEST APPOINTMENT WITH STEVENS AND TRANSMIT
FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO HIM FROM PRESIDENT FORD.

QUOTE DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I APPRECIATE YOUR FRANKNESS IN INFORMING AMBASSADOR
SAMUELS OF THE SEVERAL REASONS WHY YOU FEEL THAT
RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERESTS
OF SIERRA LEONE. IN THE HOPE THAT YOU HAVE NOT
YET TAKEN A FIRM DECISION TO SHIFT YOUR POSITION, I
HAVE TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF SENDING YOU THIS MESSAGE
SETTING FORTH THE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH CONTINUE TO
GOVERN THE POLICY OF MY GOVERNMENT.

PLEASE BE ASSURED, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT THE ONLY
OBJECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES IS TO SEE THAT A SOLUTION
IS REACHED IN ANGOLA WHICH IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS
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OF THE PEOPLE OF THAT WAR-TORN COUNTRY AND WHICH WILL
HELP INSULATE AFRICA IN THE FUTURE FROM THE DANGEROUS
PRECEDENT OF INTERVENTION BY EXTRACONTINENTAL POWERS
INTO WHAT ARE ESSENTIALLY INTERNAL DISPUTES. MY
GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE STABILITY
OF ANGOLA REQUIRES A RETURN TO THE COOPERATION AMONG
THE THREE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS FORESEEN IN THE ALVOR

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AGREEMENT LAST YEAR. WE GREATLY WELCOME THE POSITION TAKEN BY SIERRA LEONE AT THE RECENT OAU CHIEFS OF STATE MEETING IN SUPPORT OF THE CONCILIATION COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A CEASEFIRE AND A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, AND WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT ONLY THROUGH THESE MECHANISMS CAN THERE BE A LASTING AND JUST PEACE IN ANGOLA.

FOR THESE SEVERAL REASONS, THEREFORE, I URGE YOU NOT TO WAVER IN YOUR SUPPORT OF THE FAR-SIGHTED POSITION WHICH YOUR GOVERNMENT TOOK AT THE OAU CHIEFS OF

STATE MEETING, SINCERELY GERALD R. FORD UNQUOTE

4. IF ASKED, YOU MAY BRING STEVENS UP TO DATE ON THE MILITARY SITUATION, AS FOLLOWS:

THE MILITARY OUTLOOK FOR FNLA AND UNITA IS BLEAK. LARGE NUMBERS OF FNLA AND ZAIRIAN TROOPS HAVE RETREATED INTO ZAIRE. FNLA STILL MAINTAINED A PRESENCE IN SANTO ANTONIO DO ZAIRE AND SAO SALVADOR. ON JANUARY 22, MPLA AND CUBAN FORCES WERE ZEROING THEIR 122 MM ROCKETS ON TARGETS IN THE AREA AROUND TOMBOCO. THE MPLA RADIO IN LUANDA HAS ANNOUNCED AN IMMINENT ATTACK ON DAMBA IN THE NORTHERN INTERIOR, ABOUT SIXTY MILES FROM THE ZAIRIAN BORDER.

IN THE CENTER OF THE COUNTRY, MPLA AND THE CUBANS HAVE CAPTURED THE TOWNS OF SANTA COMBA AND CELA AND APPEAR TO BE SETTING UP FOR A MAJOR OFFENSIVE AT SEVERAL POINTS. THE RAILROAD TOWN OF LUSO, IN THE
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EAST, WILL BE A KEY OBJECTIVE.

SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS ARE STILL IN ANGOLA, BUT NO LONGER IN FRONT LINE POSITIONS AND PRESS REPORTS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE SAG HAS DECIDED TO PULL OUT ARE ACCURATE. WITHOUT THE SOUTH AFRICANS, UNITA WILL HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY HOLDING ITS POSITIONS.

YOU MAY ADD THAT WE ARE DOING WHAT WE CAN TO SEE THAT FNLA AND UNITA FORCES CONTINUE TO RECEIVE SUPPLIES IN THIS DIFFICULT MOMENT.

PLEASE NOTE: THE ABOVE DRAFT MESSAGE ASSUMES APPROVAL OF ALL THE PROPOSED STEPS IN REFTEL ACTION MEMORANDUM.

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5. DRAFTED: AF/C: TRBUCHANAN

APPROVED: WESCHAUFEELE

CLEARANCE: NSC: H.HORAN (IN SUBSTANCE)

6. APPROVE/DISAPPROVE

INGERSOLL

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